(b) if so, the public sector companies like Engineers India Ltd. similarly recognized organisations, who have developed state-of-the-art capabilities in oil and gas industry, would be encouraged to compete for their relevant fields of activities or even for turn-key projects?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Engineers India Limited is aware of the projects which are coming up in Middle East region and the announcement made by Technip that projects upto US$21 billion will be awarded in near future in UAE region. These are all EPC contracts wherein the size of each package is US$ 1 billion plus.

(b) Although, EIL has not executed any EPC project overseas till date, however, we are examining the above opportunities and finding out ways and means to pre-qualify for the same.

Recycled blocks in NELP

2125. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recycled blocks were included in the eighth round of auction under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); and

(b) what was the response for such blocks?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Out of 38 recycled blocks offered in the eighth bid round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VIII), bids were received for 21 blocks.

Auction under NELP

2126. SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how many blocks have been auctioned in the eight rounds of auctions under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP);

(b) of them how many are deep sea blocks and how many are on-shore blocks;

(c) whether it is a fact that the most of the blocks have been won by Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) or their joint venture (JVs); and

(d) if so, whether it defeats the purpose of NELP?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (c) Under the eighth bid round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VIII), 70 blocks (24 deepwater blocks, 28 shallow water blocks, 18 onland blocks) were offered. Bids were opened on 12.10.2009. 76 bids have been received for 36 blocks. The evaluation of bids is underway.

(d) No, Sir. NELP rounds blocks are offered through international competitive bidding system on the basis of transparent and quantifiable Bid Evaluation Criteria (BEC) indicated in Notice Inviting Offers (NIO). There is a level playing field for award of blocks to public sector and private companies. The blocks are awarded to successful bidders based of BEC.

Gas contract to GSPCC

2127. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL:
SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether bids were invited by Panna Mukta Tapti (PMT) JV in April 2006 from various companies;

(b) whether the entire gas was sold to Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) in spite of the fact that the bid of Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (GSPCL) was the highest amongst the bidders; if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Government of Gujarat has represented to the Central Government to follow the rules of tender procedure and give the offer of gas to GSPCL; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Central Government on the representation?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) The Production Sharing Contract (PSC) signed between the Government and the Joint Venture (JV) provides that the entire gas would be sold to the Government nominee.

However, during 2004-05, Government allowed PMT JV to directly sell 4.6 mmscmd gas, while the remaining about 6 mmscmd gas continued to be supplied to power and fertilizer consumers through GAIL. Further, it was decided that the position would be reviewed at the end of the year. In the meantime, perhaps on the understanding that the gas being marketed by GAIL might be released for direct marketing to JV from 2006-07, PMT JV solicited Expression of Interests (EoI) from prospective buyers to purchase gas up to 4 mmscmd from 1st April, 2006 for a period of two years with a caveat that the JV reserved the right to decide the quantity to be sold. As informed by PMT JV, GSPC and another buyer offered the highest price for this gas. The issue of continuing gas supplies to the power and fertilizer sector consumers by GAIL beyond 31.3.2006 was reviewed in the Ministry in March 2006 and it was decided that this arrangement needed to be continued for a further period of 2 years, *i.e.*, up to 31.3.2008, as then there were no alternative sources of gas supplies and any disruption in gas supplies would have resulted in idling of the existing assets in these important sectors.